

# News

United States  
Department  
of Labor



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Bureau of Labor Statistics    Washington, D.C. 20212

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Information: (202) 691-5174  
Media Contact: (202) 691-5902  
Internet Address: <http://www.bls.gov>

USDL 03-100  
For Release: 10:00 A.M. EST  
Tuesday, March 11, 2003

## MAJOR WORK STOPPAGES IN 2002

The number of workers idled, the number of days of idleness, and the percent of estimated working time lost because of strikes and lockouts were at historic lows in 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. Nineteen major work stoppages began during the year, idling 46,000 workers and resulting in 660,000 workdays of idleness (less than 1 out of every 10,000 available workdays). Comparable figures for 2001 were 29 stoppages, 99,000 workers idled, and 1.2 million days of idleness. (See table 1 and charts 1-3.) The major work stoppages series, which dates back to 1947, covers strikes and lockouts involving 1,000 workers or more and lasting at least one shift.

Of the major work stoppages beginning in 2002, 16 were in private industry and three were in state and local government. In private industry, the largest number of stoppages (five) occurred in the manufacturing sector, the construction sector (three) and the transportation and warehousing sector (three). In state and local government, two stoppages were in education services and one was in public administration.

One work stoppage beginning in 2002 accounted for 20 percent of all workers idled. This stoppage was between the Pacific Maritime Association and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, with 10,500 workers idled. None of the remaining stoppages idled 5,000 or more workers. A strike against the Cook County Court System by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees was the second largest work stoppage in terms of number of workers idled (3,800 workers), but accounted for only 8 percent of all workers idled.

Private industry sectors with the most days of idleness during the year due to work stoppages were manufacturing (209,800 days), transportation and warehousing (186,500 days), and construction (65,800 days).

Almost one-half of the year's work stoppage days of idleness stemmed from three major disputes, including the previously mentioned dispute between the Pacific Maritime Association and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (129,500 days). The other two disputes were between the Lockheed Martin Company and the Machinists (101,500 days) and the Hershey Foods Corporation and the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (84,000 days).

The average length of work stoppages beginning in 2002 was 21 days, and nearly three-fourths of all work stoppages lasted 30 days or less. The longest work stoppage was a 51-day dispute between three Queens, New York, bus lines and the Transport Workers, which also was the only dispute in 2002 that lasted more than 50 days (See chart 4.)

The term "major work stoppage" includes both worker-initiated strikes and employer-initiated lockouts that involve 1,000 workers or more. BLS does not attempt to distinguish between strikes and lockouts in its statistics.

Table 1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers, 1947-2002

Year	Number of stoppages		Workers involved 1/		Days idle 2/	
	Beginning in period	In effect during period	Beginning in period (thousands)	In effect during period (thousands)	Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time 3/
1947 .....	270	--	1,629	--	25,720	(4)
1948 .....	245	--	1,435	--	26,127	0.22
1949 .....	262	--	2,537	--	43,420	.38
1950 .....	424	--	1,698	--	30,390	.26
1951 .....	415	--	1,462	--	15,070	.12
1952 .....	470	--	2,746	--	48,820	.38
1953 .....	437	--	1,623	--	18,130	.14
1954 .....	265	--	1,075	--	16,630	.13
1955 .....	363	--	2,055	--	21,180	.16
1956 .....	287	--	1,370	--	26,840	.20
1957 .....	279	--	887	--	10,340	.07
1958 .....	332	--	1,587	--	17,900	.13
1959 .....	245	--	1,381	--	60,850	.43
1960 .....	222	--	896	--	13,260	.09
1961 .....	195	--	1,031	--	10,140	.07
1962 .....	211	--	793	--	11,760	.08
1963 .....	181	--	512	--	10,020	.07
1964 .....	246	--	1,183	--	16,220	.11
1965 .....	268	--	999	--	15,140	.10
1966 .....	321	--	1,300	--	16,000	.10
1967 .....	381	--	2,192	--	31,320	.18
1968 .....	392	--	1,855	--	35,367	.20
1969 .....	412	--	1,576	--	29,397	.16
1970 .....	381	--	2,468	--	52,761	.29
1971 .....	298	--	2,516	--	35,538	.19
1972 .....	250	--	975	--	16,764	.09
1973 .....	317	--	1,400	--	16,260	.08
1974 .....	424	--	1,796	--	31,809	.16
1975 .....	235	--	965	--	17,563	.09
1976 .....	231	--	1,519	--	23,962	.12
1977 .....	298	--	1,212	--	21,258	.10
1978 .....	219	--	1,006	--	23,774	.11
1979 .....	235	--	1,021	--	20,409	.09
1980 .....	187	--	795	--	20,844	.09
1981 .....	145	--	729	--	16,908	.07
1982 .....	96	--	656	--	9,061	.04
1983 .....	81	--	909	--	17,461	.08
1984 .....	62	--	376	--	8,499	.04
1985 .....	54	--	324	--	7,079	.03
1986 .....	69	--	533	--	11,861	.05
1987 .....	46	--	174	--	4,481	.02
1988 .....	40	--	118	--	4,381	.02
1989 .....	51	--	452	--	16,996	.07
1990 .....	44	--	185	--	5,926	.02
1991 .....	40	--	392	--	4,584	.02
1992 .....	35	--	364	--	3,989	.01
1993 .....	35	--	182	--	3,981	.01
1994 .....	45	--	322	--	5,020	.02
1995 .....	31	--	192	--	5,771	.02
1996 .....	37	--	273	--	4,889	.02
1997 .....	29	--	339	--	4,497	.01
1998 .....	34	--	387	--	5,116	.02
1999 .....	17	--	73	--	1,996	.01

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers, 1947-2002--Continued

Year	Number of stoppages		Workers involved 1/		Days idle 2/	
	Beginning in period	In effect during period	Beginning in period (thousands)	In effect during period (thousands)	Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time 3/
2000 .....	39	--	394	--	20,419	.06
2001 .....	29	--	99	--	1,151	(5)
2002	19	20	45.9	46.9	659.6	(5)
January	0	1	0	1.0	21.0	(5)
February	1	2	1.5	2.5	9.0	(5)
March	1	1	2.9	2.9	43.5	(5)
April	2	3	4.1	7.0	80.7	(5)
May	3	5	5.1	9.2	138.2	(5)
June	1	3	1.5	5.3	36.0	(5)
July	3	4	6.7	8.2	54.4	(5)
August	1	3	3.5	6.2	50.6	(5)
September	3	3	13.7	13.7	40.3	(5)
October	1	3	1.2	13.5	133.4	(5)
November	2	2	4.3	4.3	23.9	(5)
December	1	1	1.4	1.4	28.6	(5)

1/ Workers are counted more than once if they are involved in more than one stoppage during the year.

2/ Days idle includes all stoppages in effect during the reference period.

3/ Agricultural and government employees are included in the calculation

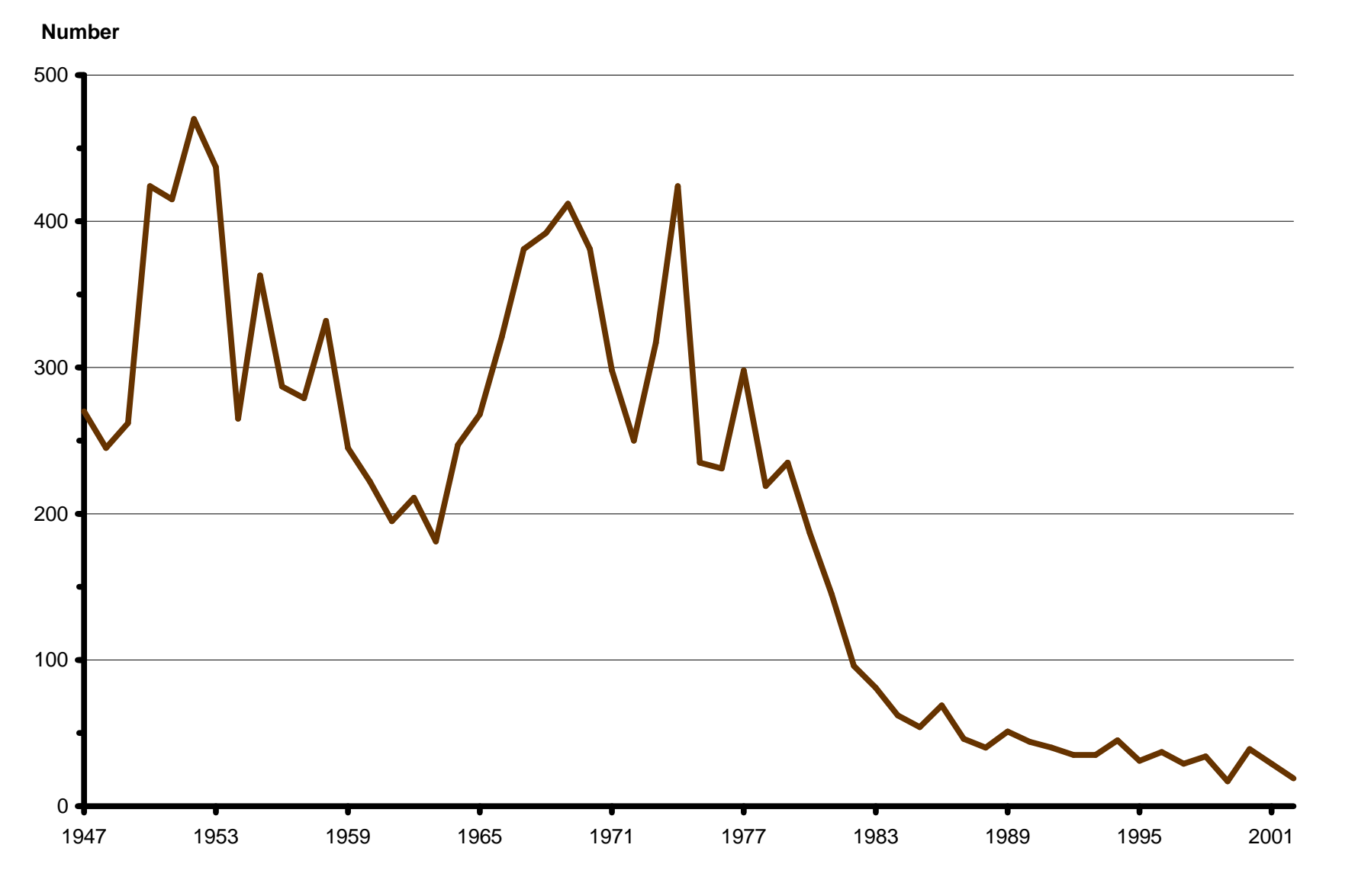
of estimated working time; private households, forestry, and fishery employees are excluded.

4/ Data not available.

5/ Less than .005.

NOTE: Dash indicates no data for this category.

Chart 1. Number of major work stoppages, 1947-2002



**Chart 2. Workers involved in major work stoppages, 1947-2002**

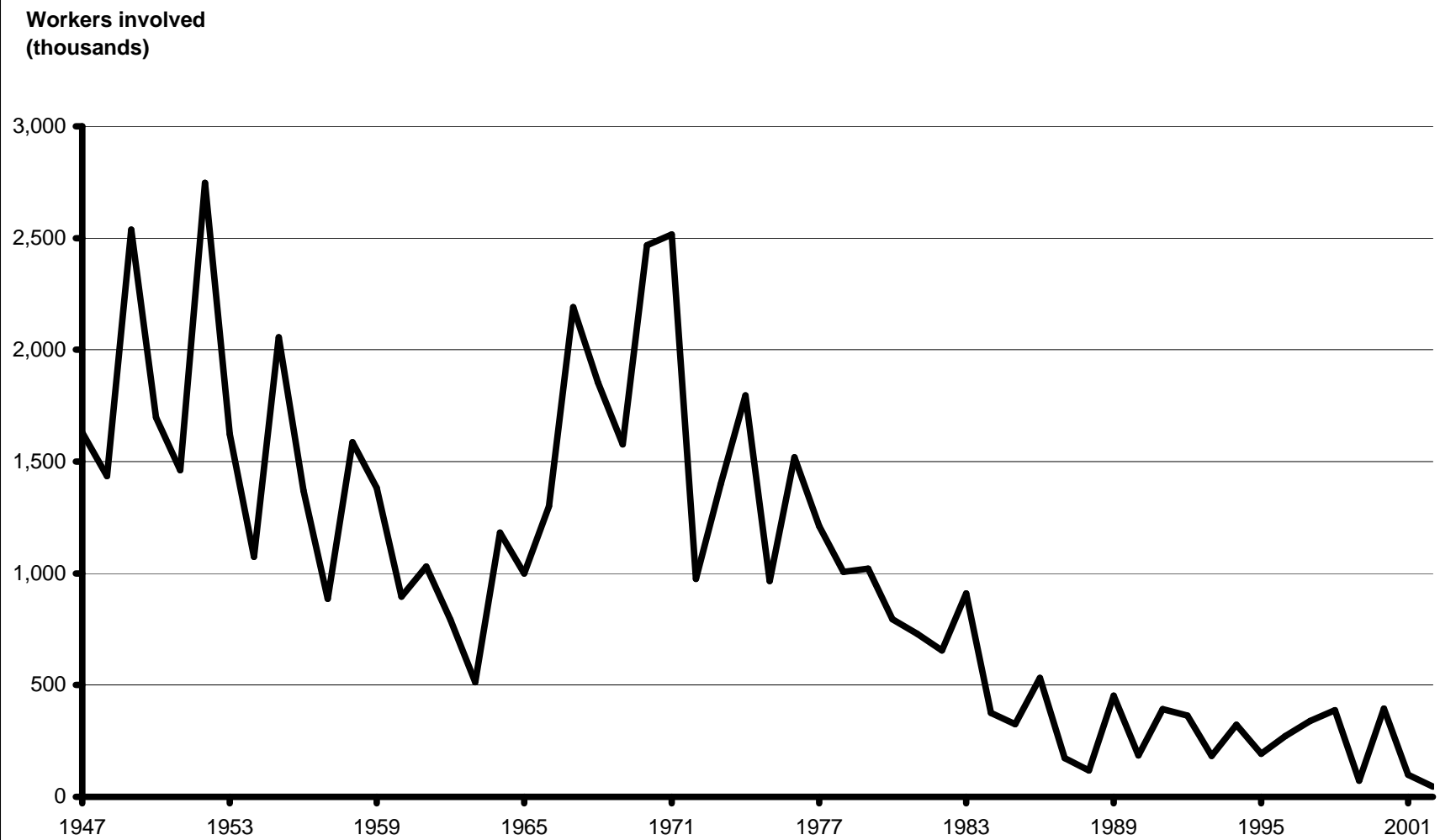
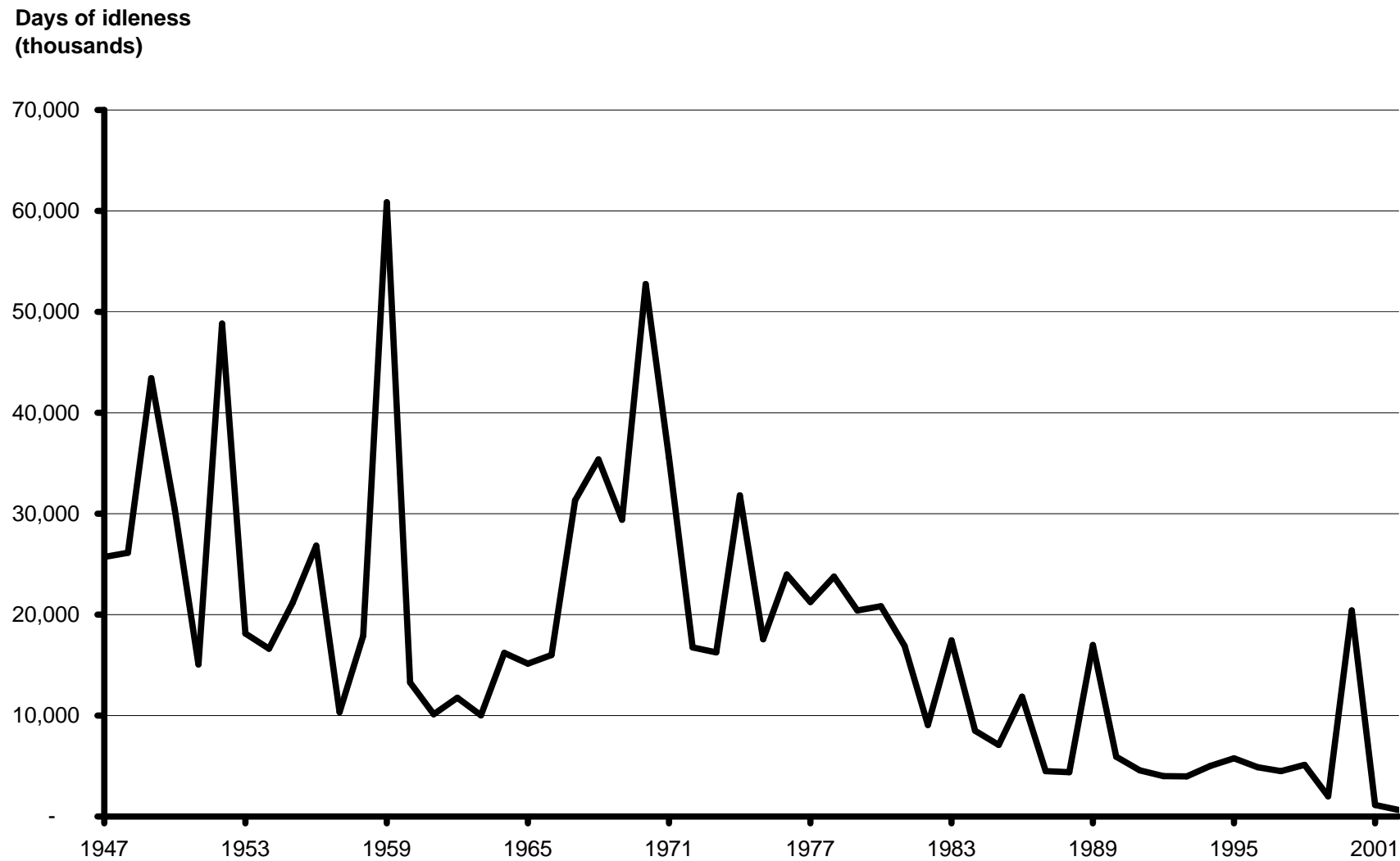


Chart 3. Days of idleness from major work stoppages, 1947-2002



**Chart 4. Duration of work stoppages beginning in 2002**

